



## ***Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks***

Region Four  
4600 Giant springs Road  
Great Falls, MT 59405  
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FAX: 406-751-8477  
February 27, 2007

TO: Governor's Office, Attn: Mike Volesky, PO Box 200801, Helena, MT 59620-0801  
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks: Director's Office, Legal Unit, Fisheries, & Wildlife  
Mt Historical Society, State Historic Preservation Office, 225 North Roberts, Veteran's Memorial Bldg.,  
Helena, MT 59620  
George Ochenski, PO Box 689, Helena, MT 59624  
Cascade County Commissioners, County Courthouse, Great Falls, MT 59401  
Environmental Quality Council, Capitol Building, Helena, MT 59620  
Jon Thompson, City of Great Falls Parks and Rec Department, 1700 River Drive North, Great Falls,  
MT 59405  
Walleyes Unlimited, POB 937, Great Falls, MT, 59403  
Russell Country Sportsmen, POB 282, Great Falls, MT 59403  
Missouri River Fly Fishers, POB 1985, Great Falls, MT 59403  
Alvin Windy Boy, Chippewa Cree Tribe, RR1 Box 544, Box Elder, MT, 59521  
Henry Anderson, Little Shell Tribe of the Chippewa Indians, POB 1384, Great Falls, MT, 59521  
John Murray, THPO Blackfeet Nation, POB 2809, Browning, MT, 59417  
Steve Doherty, 410 Central Ave, Ste 522, Great Falls, MT, 59401  
Victor Workman, POB 1726, Whitefish, MT, 59937  
Willie Doll, POB 1142, Malta, MT, 59538  
Dan Vermillion, 315 East Lewis, Livingston, MT, 59047  
Shane Colton, 304 Yellowstone, Billings, MT, 59101  
PPL-Montana, 40 East Broadway, Butte , MT, 59710

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP), Region Four, has prepared the enclosed draft environmental assessment (EA) for the purpose of improving angling quality of Wadsworth Pond in Cascade County through supplemental stocking of yellow perch.

The draft is out for a 28-day public review. Please direct your questions or comments to Grant Grisak, 4600 Giant Springs Road, Great Falls, MT 59405, (406) 454-5853, or e-mail to [ggrisak@mt.gov](mailto:ggrisak@mt.gov). Questions and comments must be received by Monday, March 26, 2007.

Sincerely,

Gary Bertellotti.  
Regional Supervisor

***Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks***  
1420 E 6th Ave, PO Box 200701 Helena, MT 59620-0701  
(406) 444-2452

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

### **PART 1. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION**

**Project Title:** Supplemental stocking of yellow perch in Wadsworth Pond, Great Falls.

**Project Location:** Wadsworth Pond  
Great Falls, Montana  
T 20 N, R 1 E, S 17

Anticipated Implementation Date: April 2007

#### **Description of Project:**

FWP is proposing to conduct supplemental stocking of yellow perch in Wadsworth Pond to enhance the fishery. Although MFWP has never stocked yellow perch in Wadsworth Pond, yellow perch are present, most likely from the Sun River water supply that provides water for the pond. To accomplish the objectives of the proposed project MFWP would transfer perch from an existing wild population.

The process of transferring wild fish includes conducting disease testing of the donor population, the donor population must be free of pathogens new to the receiving population, the MFWP Fish Health Committee must review the proposal and decide whether to accept, deny or modify the fish transfer request.

This project is being proposed to help realize the full potential of Wadsworth Pond as a quality urban fishery that provides angling opportunity for local residents and generates interest in the sport of angling by children through various education programs conducted at Wadsworth Pond.

#### **Background:**

Yellow perch are present in the pond, but numbers have fluctuated over the years as a result of habitat changes and predation by other fish species such as walleye, largemouth bass and northern pike. Wadsworth Pond was very shallow with a large amount of aquatic vegetation. Those habitat conditions provided exceptional spawning habitat and ideal cover for perch to avoid predators. As a result the population was stunted. The dense aquatic vegetation made angling from shore difficult. MFWP has implemented numerous management actions over the

years to improve and maintain the quality of the fishery, including stocking predator species such as walleye and largemouth bass, and stocking catchable size trout, with limited success. In 2004 MFWP implemented a dredging project in the pond to remove silt and aquatic vegetation, provide deep-water habitat and improve habitat for a number of fish species. Since the dredging project, perch are present in the pond, but angler success is low. FWP believes that occasional supplemental stocking may be necessary to help maintain the perch population at a quality level.

A warm water fishing stamp is already required to possess warm water fish (including perch) at Wadsworth Pond. Stocking perch will not change license requirements for Wadsworth Pond.

**Alternatives to Proposed Action:**

The No Action alternative is the only reasonable alternative considered in this analysis. If implemented, the future of the Wadsworth Pond fishery would be uncertain and the objectives of this proposal would likely not be met.

**Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction:**

On February 21, the City of Great Falls Parks and Recreation Coordinator was contacted to discuss this project. The City of Great Falls favors management actions such as this to enhance recreational opportunities at Wadsworth Park.

## **PART 2. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

Table 1. Potential impact on physical environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Provided
1. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
2. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats				X		
3. Introduction of new species into an area				X		
4. Vegetation cover, quantity and quality				X		
5. Water quality, quantity and distribution (surface or groundwater)				X		
6. Existing water right or reservation				X		
7. Geology and soil quality, stability and moisture				X		
8. Air quality or objectional odors				X		
9. Historical and archaeological sites				X		
10. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				X		
11. Aesthetics				X		

### **Comments**

(A description of potentially significant, or unknown, impacts and potential alternatives for mitigation must be provided.)

Table 2. Potential impacts on human environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Provided
1. Social structures and cultural diversity				X		
2. Changes in existing public benefits provided by wildlife populations and/or habitat				X		
3. Local and state tax base and tax revenue				X		
4. Agricultural production				X		
5. Human health				X		
6. Quantity and distribution of community and personal income				X		
7. Access to and quality of recreational activities				X		
8. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals (ordinances)				X		See 8
9. Distribution and density of population and housing				X		
10. Demands for government services				X		
11. Industrial and/or commercial activity				X		

## **Comments**

(A description of potentially significant, or unknown, impacts and potential alternatives for mitigation must be provided as comments.)

8. The objective of this project is to improve angling quality at Wadsworth Pond. This would be beneficial to the public and is consistent with the management objectives of the pond fishery and the park.

**Does the proposed action involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely harmful if they were to occur?**

There are no known or anticipated risks identified.

**Does the proposed action have impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant?**

There are no known or anticipated impacts.

**Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action when alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider. Include a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:**

The only reasonable alternative involves implementing the No Action Alternative. Implementing this alternative would result in status quo management and likely result in a marginal fishery with limited public benefit.

**Prepared by:** Grant Grisak  
Fisheries biologist  
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks  
4600 Giant Springs Road  
Great Falls, MT 59405  
454-5853

**Date Completed:** February 26, 2007

**Email address for comments:** ggrisak@mt.gov

**Mail comments to the above physical address or email by;** March 26, 2007